

CHRB NEWS & REVIEW

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD

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New rooms for backstretch workers

BAY MEADOWS UPGRADES LIVING STANDARDS

In the beginning there were tack rooms – small cubicles at the end of shedrows, used primarily for storing saddles, bits, bandages, liniments, and everything else a trainer might need to run a racing stable.

As a seeming afterthought, cots were placed in corners or mattresses were tossed on the floor, so that stable hands could live in the tack rooms, free of charge, and be available to work at odd hours. Even those tack rooms designated solely as sleeping quarters –

with the equipment removed – remained unappealing often due to inadequate heating and ventilation, poor lighting, and austere surroundings.

Through the years, some racetracks and racing fairs in California upgraded these living quarters in various ways, and overall living conditions in the barn area improved significantly with the construction of recreation halls, medical and dental clinics, clean restrooms and shower facilities, and other amenities.

Now Bay Meadows Race Course has set a new standard with the construction of a dormitory just outside of the stable area featuring 49 “singles” with two persons per room and four “doubles” large enough to accommodate four people. Bay Meadows furnishes each room with bunk beds. Each of the 53 rooms has a large window for natural light and ventilation, a wall heater, and acoustical materials to cut the noise level outside.

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

With the purchase of Santa Anita Park by Magna International, I want to welcome that company's chairman, prominent owner-breeder Frank Stronach, to the growing family of horsemen who own or operate racetracks and race meets in California, among them R.D. Hubbard at Hollywood Park and Edward Allred at Los Alamitos.

I believe that horsemen bring something extra – a personal commitment that goes beyond dollars and cents – when they become racing executives. Horsemen are willing to look beyond the bottom line and they have been known to operate race meets at great sacrifice.

Dr. Allred, for example, who is a quarter-horse owner, purchased Los Alamitos and operated that racetrack at a personal financial loss for some years, reflecting his deep commitment to the quarter-horse industry.

Likewise, two harness horsemen, Lloyd Arnold and Christo Bardis, rescued the harness industry in California when they operated the Cal-Expo meets at a loss in the 1980s, and since then other harness horsemen have put themselves at financial risk by operating meets in California, including Paul Reddam and Perry DeLuna.

Clement Hirsch, Sherwood Chillingworth, and the entire board of directors of the Oak Tree Racing Association are a prime example of “horsemen helping horsemen,” given their long history of charitable contributions for the benefit of the California horse racing industry.

John Mabee, John Harris, Kjell Qvale, Jack Liebau, and Scoop Vessels are just a few of the many other horsemen whose involvement in California racetrack and training center operations have helped establish California as one of the premier racing jurisdictions in the world.

And as long as we're handing out credit to horsemen, let's not forget Ken Maddy, who during his years in the State Senate was a champion for horse racing.

Whether they own or operate racetracks, run training centers, or serve in the State Legislature, horsemen generally have a deep level of commitment and the practical knowledge to succeed where others might fail. For these reasons, we sincerely appreciate Mr. Stronach's decision to become part of California's racing community.

Roy C. Wood, Jr.
Roy C. Wood, Jr.



IN THE GOLDEN STATE

HANDS ACROSS THE WATER

Joseph Fenley, a member of the California Horse Racing Board since 1996, has been serving a dual role for the citizens of California by representing the State in trade discussions with the United Kingdom. Appointed last year by former Governor Pete Wilson to the post of Director of the California Trade and Commerce Agency in the United Kingdom, Fenley has been continuing his work under the new administration of Governor Gray Davis. By commuting across the Atlantic, Fenley has admirably served in both capacities as a trade ambassador and a racing commissioner. His efforts in the United Kingdom have contributed to the establishment of the California House in London, as outlined in the following report.

The California Trade and Commerce Agency, in partnership with the University of California (UC) Education Abroad Program, announced the establishment of a center in London to promote study, research, commerce, and tourism between the United Kingdom and California.

The new center, California House, is located at 8 St. James Place in the prestigious Mayfair district, near Buckingham Palace and St. James Park.

California House was the inspiration of John Marcum, university-wide director of the UC Education Abroad Program; Don Crawford, director of the UC Education Abroad Program in London; and Joseph Fenley, director of the California Trade and Commerce Agency in the United Kingdom.

By joining the California agencies together, UC and the Trade and Commerce Agency will create a focal point to promote academic and commercial exchange between California and Britain.

Academically, the London office will serve as headquarters for an enlarged Education Abroad Program between UC and British universities. UC also will use California House as a hub to outreach alumni in the United Kingdom and Europe.

In addition to increasing educational exchange, California House will help California and British companies form strategic global partnerships. California and British businesses will be able to use California House for meetings, functions, receptions, luncheons, the issuance of news releases, and public relations matters.

The "Friends of California" network will serve as a

launching point for California and British businesses wishing to expand into each other's markets, helping to increase trade and investment in both directions. There also will be a library at this location for people needing information on the UC Education Abroad Program, tourism in the Golden State, and trade and investment opportunities between California and Britain.

(Continued on page 10)

CALENDAR

MARCH

- 24 – CHRB monthly meeting in Arcadia.
- 31 – Golden Gate Fields meet opens in Albany.

APRIL

- 8 – Cal-Expo harness meet opens in Sacramento.
- 22 – Hollywood Park meet opens in Inglewood.
- 23 – CHRB monthly meeting in Inglewood.

JUNE

- 11 – CHRB monthly meeting in Albany.
- 16 – Stockton fair meet opens.
- 30 – Pleasanton fair meet opens.

THE EQUINE PRESCRIPTION

FROM THE DESK OF THE CHRB
EQUINE MEDICAL DIRECTOR



DR. RON JENSEN

The California Horse Racing Board (CHRB) has recently amended its medication rules to allow the administration of certain approved anti-ulcer medications up to 24 hours prior to racing.

The incidence of gastric ulcers in racehorses is higher than was previously thought. The CHRB / UC Davis Necropsy Program found that 87% of the horses subjected to post-mortem examination had gastric ulcers. The exact cause of these ulcers has not yet been determined.

Compounds known as H2-histamine blockers, such as cimetidine (Tagamet) and ranitidine (Zantac), have been shown to be effective in the treatment of ulcer disease and are commonly used at the racetrack for that purpose.

To be effective in treating ulcers, these medications should be given daily. However, CHRB rules prohibit the administration of all medication, except certain specific exceptions, within 48 hours of racing. Therefore, because these medications were not among the exceptions prior to the recent rule change, these anti-ulcer treatments had to be discontinued 48 hours prior to racing.

The effects of these medications are almost limited to the decreasing acid production in the stomach and are generally accepted in the veterinary and scientific community as having very little potential to affect performance. However, high urinary concentrations of these medications can interfere with some drug-screening procedures, such as thin layer chromatography (TLC).

Concern that horses with gastric ulcers were not being correctly treated led the CHRB to fund a study conducted by Drs. Cindy Baker and Scott Stanley at the UC Davis Racing Analytical Laboratory. The study was designed to determine if these medications could be administered to a horse up to 24 hours before racing without causing inter-

ference with drug-testing procedures. These medications (cimetidine and ranitidine) were administered to horses at the UC Davis Center for Equine Health. Urine samples were analyzed at Truesdail Laboratories.

The results of this study indicated that recommended doses of cimetidine, when administered either orally or intravenously, and ranitidine when administered intravenously, could be given to a horse up to 24 hours before racing without interfering with the routine testing for other drugs.

Based on this information, the CHRB amended Rule 1843.5 (Medication, Drugs, and Other Substances Permitted After Entry in a Race) to allow the administration of approved anti-ulcer medications until 24 hours before the post

time of the race in which the horse is entered. The rule further requires that a list of approved anti-ulcer medications and the route of administration be posted at each racetrack in the office of the Official CHRB Veterinarian.

Those anti-ulcer medications that are currently approved for administration up to 24 hours prior to racing are **cimetidine**, when used orally in an amount not to exceed 18 mg/Kg 3 times per day or when used intravenously in an amount not to exceed 6.6 mg/Kg 4 times per day, and **ranitidine**, only when used intravenously in an amount not to exceed 1.5 mg/Kg 3 times per day.

Other anti-ulcer drugs may be added to this permitted list if it can be demonstrated they are beneficial in the treatment of gastric ulcers and do not interfere with the drug testing procedure.

“The results of this study indicated (the medications, as approved) could be given to a horse up to 24 hours before racing without interfering with the routine testing for other drugs.”

Dr. Ronald Jensen





JACQUELINE WAGNER

Once a Star, Always a Star

The CHRB's Winner's Circle Award recognizes the special contributions of staff members.

News & Review editor Mike Marten interviewed the latest award recipient, Jacqueline Wagner.

Back in the early '70s when she was growing up in the Oakland hills, Jacqueline Wagner had her own variety show on the local cable company's public access channel.

"We called it 'Star Time'," she recalled with a smile. "I sang, danced, interviewed guests, and sometimes played the piano. I loved it."

Later when she landed a brief job as a back-up singer for the rock group Earth, Wind & Fire, her hopes for a career in show business really soared. She even cut a few demo records to show off her voice.

But dreams change. She went off to college, fell in love, married, moved permanently to Sacramento, raised a son, and eventually went to work for the State of California. That's not nearly as glamorous as a career in show business would have been, but hey, she's still the life of the party. Just give her a piano and an audience and she'll take it from there.

"It's funny the way you look back at your life and consider the paths that you took to get you where you are now," said Wagner. "I feel like I made all of the right choices. I'm happy with the way things turned out."

Her colleagues at the California Horse Racing Board also are glad that Wagner wound up working with them – so much so that they selected her for the Winner's Circle Award, which is awarded periodically in recognition of outstanding performance by a CHRB employee.

So how did the skinny little girl from Oakland end up in Sacramento managing the CHRB Policy and Regulations Unit and serving as Board liaison with the State Legislature?

"Of course I didn't know it at the time, but really the die was cast when I came to Sacramento to attend Cal State after I graduated from high school (in 1973)," explained Wagner. "I never thought I would stay in Sacramento. I figured that I would graduate in four years, then head back to the Bay Area.

"Well, the first thing that happened was I met my future husband, Paul, that first year in college, and we married in 1975. He graduated ahead of me, and he immediately went to work for the State of California. His work was one good reason for us to remain in Sacramento. You know how it goes. After a while, you start putting down little roots.

"After I earned my BA in psychology, I decided to continue at CSU to get my counseling credentials. I thought that teaching in the school system was my calling. It wasn't until after I finished my graduate studies and I was working on my thesis that I questioned whether counseling was really what I wanted to do with my life.

"I was working in retail sales at the time, and Mervyn's was courting me to go into their management program. I did so for several years. Then I went to work for Merrill Lynch as a sales assistant for five brokers. I loved that work and I thought that I would stay there, but another company was wooing me and I wound up working for them as a portfolio manager.

"Again, I thought it was a job for life, but the 1987 crash changed everything," continued Wagner. "The company started downsizing. I survived the first two rounds of layoffs, but I began looking around for something with more stability. There's nothing more stable than the State of California.

"Initially I went to work for the Franchise Tax Board as a tax compliance representative. After it was determined that people were delinquent in their taxes, it was my job to find their assets and to get the money by garnishing their wages, bank accounts, or whatever. That was definitely not what I wanted to do with the rest of my life, so I started looking around for another state agency, and lo and behold! I found the California Horse Racing Board."

Hired in 1990 to work in the CHRB drug-testing program, Wagner actually

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BE OUR GUEST...



The California Horse Racing Board believes the best way to regulate an industry is to be fully informed. The CHRB regularly solicits input from the public and the horse racing industry, and this guest editorial page is one more forum for that purpose.

This guest editorial is provided by Frank Stronach, Chairman of the Los Angeles Turf Club and Chairman and founder of Magna International Inc., one of the world's largest automotive parts suppliers. MI Developments, the real estate development arm of Magna International, purchased Santa Anita Park in December of last year.

As the new owner of Santa Anita Park, I feel privileged to be able to participate in the future growth of "the great race place." I also feel that we can make it even greater yet. In our proposed redevelopment of the race track, all of our actions will be guided by one overriding objective: to make Santa Anita the world's premier showcase for thoroughbred racing, as well as a potential role model for the future success of our industry.

In both business and horse racing, I started out at the lowest levels. Shortly after immigrating to Canada in the early 1950s, I opened a one-man tool and die shop. That small business has grown to become Magna International Inc., the world's most diversified supplier of automotive systems and components, with 50,000 employees and sales this year of approximately \$10 billion.

But horse racing is more than just another business to me. It is a business of love. My interest in horse racing dates back to the early 1960s, when I purchased my first horse and became passionate about the sport. I have been involved ever since. Today, my family and I own Adena Springs Farms, which breeds thoroughbreds at farms in Kentucky, Florida, and Canada. These horses race under the Stronach Stables name, which was last year's top money-winning stable and leading thoroughbred race horse breeder in North America.

Given my understanding and love for horses and horse racing, I believe that I can contribute to the success of Santa Anita and horse racing as a whole. I also believe that some of the success that I have brought to Magna and my own racing stables can be brought to Santa Anita.

Since assuming ownership, we have set out three short-term priorities for Santa Anita: (1) improve the track conditions for the horses and build new barns, (2) improve the living conditions for the backstretch personnel, and (3) make the track more customer-friendly by improving the grandstand and dining facilities.

We will begin work on these changes as soon as this meet ends in April, with renovations planned for the dining room and lounge areas. As soon as the horses leave, we intend to remodel the grandstand and begin construction of some new barns and dormitories.

Long-term, we want to redevelop Santa Anita into a world-class entertainment destination. Some of the early draft plans that we have discussed with members of the community of Arcadia and with horse owners and trainers include building a "city walk" leading up to the race track, complete with restaurants, bars, and retail outlets. The walk will lead to "The Greatest Show on Earth" in regards to horses. All of these plans are still at the preliminary stage and subject to change.

However, I believe these sorts of changes are necessary to attract a new, younger, and more family-oriented crowd. I have a concern that live racing is deteriorating, and I know that many other people in our industry share that concern. At most racetracks I go to these days, I typically see an older crowd, and very little in the way of an overall entertainment experience. However, if we want to grow and prosper as an industry 10 and 20 years down the road, we must make changes now to attract a wider variety of people, including young people and families.

In essence, we must recognize that nowadays people have a lot of choices in regards to entertainment. We in horse racing must fight for our share of the entertainment dollar, and we need to begin by making the track experience more exciting and fun. In redeveloping Santa Anita Park, we want to demonstrate that thoroughbred horse racing is a wonderful sport and a great entertainment choice.

In the final analysis, I am confident that any changes we undertake at Santa Anita will be a win for the community of Arcadia, a win for the horse racing community, a win for our customers, and, naturally, a win for our shareholders.

BAY MEADOWS:



EACH OF THE 53 ROOMS IN THE NEW DORMITORY at Bay Meadows was built to motel standards with adequate space, natural lighting, acoustics, heating, and ventilation.

(Continued from page 1)

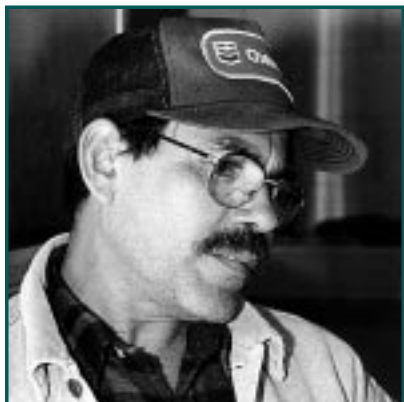
“A nice thing about the dormitory is its location outside of the stable gate, away from the horses, which makes the workers feel like they’ve gone home,” explained Richard Lewis, a former trainer who now serves as coordinator of racing operations at Bay Meadows. “The dorm gives everyone a sense of community. They police themselves, keep the noise down, and keep the area clean.”

A groom, Fabian Guera, nodded in agreement: “Getting away from the barn makes it easier to relax. Nobody bothers you. And you can’t hear any noise outside...except maybe on payday.”

Another groom, Benigno Sandoval, summed it up with one word: “Perfecto!”

The nearby recreation hall is pretty much like the others around the state with couches, televisions, pool tables, video

A NEW STANDARD



GROOM BENIGNO SANDOVAL (above) and assistant trainer Rajendra Sashankar (to the left of the horse, shown with Chaplain David Corrales) have nothing but praise for the new living quarters and other improvements at Bay Meadows, such as the recreation hall (bottom right).

The bed and other furnishings pictured below are not typical of all the rooms, but they do indicate the pride that some residents have in their new accommodations.



games, and vending machines, but again, its location outside the stable area makes it seem more like an outing, a way to get away from it all.

Medical and dental clinics operated by the California Thoroughbred Horsemen's Foundation are close by, along with the Chaplain's Office and a branch of the Winners Foundation, which deals with substance-abuse problems.

"I think it has been a positive injection into the morale of

the people here," said Chaplain David Corrales, who interacts on a very personal level with the stable hands. "The rooms are nice and clean, and the track provided free beds and lockers. It's a nice place to live for the people who work here."

Racehorses require round-the-clock supervision, so when Bay Meadows rebuilt its stable area last year and con-

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Full-Card Simulcasting Still Going Strong in California

By John Reagan
CHRB Staff

California racing associations have been importing as many as 20 races from outside of the state each racing day since January 1 when a new law, SB 27, permitted full-card simulcasting. California racing patrons have placed millions of dollars in wagers on races from New York, Florida, Louisiana, and Arkansas.

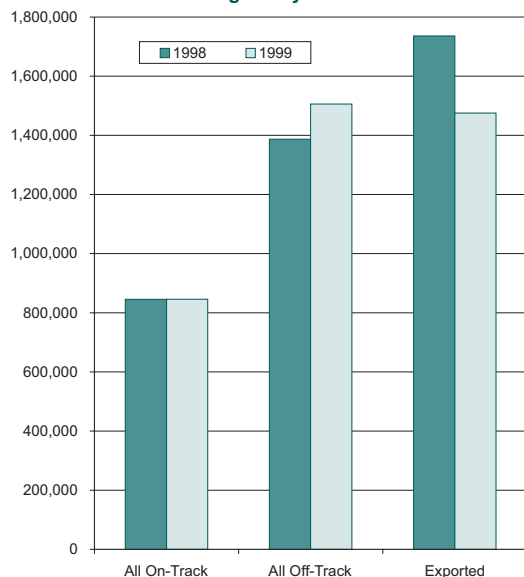
Largely due to full-card simulcasting, handle within California has shown its first solid increases in years. As presented in the accompanying charts, on-track handle is up as much as 4 percent and off-track handle, which had been stagnant for many years, has seen double-digit increases this year. The handle outside of California has seen

a decrease due to a contractual dispute with the New York OTB system. However, that dispute was settled in mid-March and New York off-track bettors will now be able to place wagers on California races again.

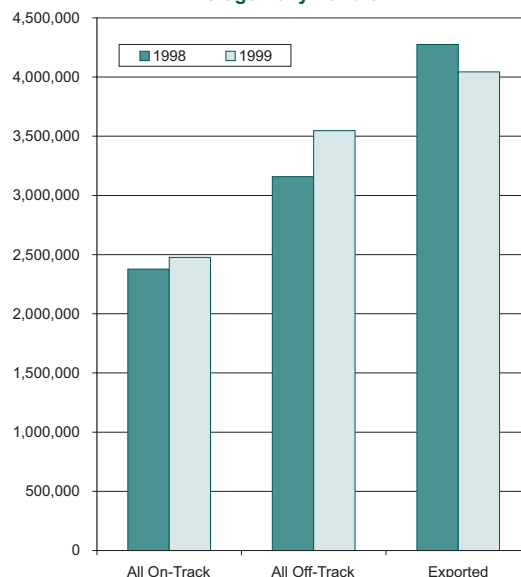
The increase in handle has been a boon to all those receiving pari-mutuel distributions except for the State of California. State license fees were reduced substantially by SB 27 in order to provide tax relief to the racing industry. Virtually all other pari-mutuel distributions have seen increases this year.

Monthly updates on the results of full-card simulcasting will be presented at upcoming CHRB meetings. However, "so far, so good" is the current assessment of the full-card simulcasting program.

SB 27 Impact: January 1–March 14
Northern Thoroughbreds
Average Daily Handle



SB 27 Impact: January 1–March 14
Southern Thoroughbreds
Average Daily Handle



COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION — The CHRB provided students at California State University-Sacramento with the opportunity to be actively engaged in the real-world analysis and practice of software development. As part of the Senior Project course directed by Professor Robert Buckley (second from left), students spent six months working with CHRB Assistant Executive Director Roy Minami (second from right), Chief Information Officer Mory Atashkar (far left), and Chief of Administration Paige Noble (far right) applying software engineering principles to the development of a large-scale computer system. The four students in the project were (from the left) Chun-Lin, Scott Carlson, Renato Ibarreta, and Thomas Tran.



Comings and Goings at the CHRB....

With more than a century of service in state government between them, four valued members of the CHRB staff recently received gifts and plaques marking their 25-year anniversaries.

The four honored employees are **Edith Bold**, the secretary to the assistant executive director, who has been with the CHRB since 1985; **Mike Howell**, a senior special investigator, who joined the CHRB in 1989; **John Schillin**, supervisor of the Satellite Wagering Unit, with the CHRB since 1984; and **Paige Noble**, chief of administration, on the CHRB staff since 1991.

Bold actually started her state service in 1951, but she left the state for a number of years in order to raise her two daughters.

Patrick McDonald has retired after 10 years with the CHRB.

Salianne Rodriguez was promoted to office technician, and she filled the position in the split sample program created by McDonald's retirement. Salianne has been with the state for five years and came to the CHRB in 1996 from the Department of Justice.

Anson Gip joined the CHRB on March 1 as an office assistant in the office services unit at headquarters. He transferred from CalPERS.



THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES — Edith Bold received a plaque from Assistant Executive Director Roy Minami commemorating her 25 years of service in state government.

PUTTING FACES WITH THE NAMES AND VOICES — Often the public's only contact with some of our licensing personnel is by telephone or mail, so we decided to show off our expert staff with this photograph. Front and center is Pam Reichardt, whose bubbly personality has made her popular in her current assignment at Bay Meadows. Marlene Valencia (left) and Doris Figgins (right) brighten up the headquarters office in Sacramento.





JOSEPH FENLEY

The synergies between UC and the California Trade and Commerce Agency are enormous. In addition to providing an internship program for UC students, the university's worldwide excellence in scientific research will provide increased opportunities for technological transfer and trade between California and the United Kingdom in the bioscience and information technology sectors.

Donations in support of California House are tax-deductible in both countries due to UC's designation as a charitable trust. Benefits of being a corpo-

rate sponsor include having a plaque prominently displayed in California House in appreciation of contributions toward furthering study, research, commerce, and tourism between California and Britain. Corporate donors also will have first choice in reserving the conference room for business or receptions in London.



UNITED CALIFORNIA STATE EMPLOYEES CAMPAIGN A SUCCESS

**By Janet Bandy
CHRB Staff**

The United California State Employees Campaign (UCSEC) was established by law in 1957 and is the single charitable fund-raising drive held annually for state employees. This year's drive for CHRB employees was held just prior to the holiday season, and employees responded by opening their hearts and pocketbooks to help fund charitable organizations for the coming year. Campaigns were held at CHRB headquarters and field offices.

The campaign in which CHRB headquarters participates includes approximately 65,000 state employees in the counties of Sacramento, Yolo, El Dorado, Placer, and Amador. Employees may give to any not-for-profit agency in their local community, elsewhere in California, or in any other state in the nation. Through this annual campaign, more than \$3 million is donated annually.

At the start of the campaign, two community-based organizations visited CHRB headquarters to introduce em-

ployees to their services. One of the organizations was Saddle Pals Therapeutic Center. Saddle Pals provides therapeutic horsemanship services to physically, mentally, and emotionally challenged individuals. The second organization was People Reaching Out. Through education, prevention, intervention, and counseling services, People Reaching Out assists at-risk youths and their families to address issues of alcohol/drug abuse and violence.

Names, addresses, and descriptions of services for more than 600 organizations were provided headquarters employees so they could select from a wide range of charities providing varied services. To give employees an opportunity to donate to the worthwhile charities in the horse racing industry, names of industry charities were also provided. This year there was a significant increase in the number of employees participating in the campaign and the amount of dollars donated.



Articles and photographs appropriate for CHRB News & Review may be submitted to
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Please help us enforce California's racing rules.
Call (800) 805-7223 to
report any violations.

structed five new barns as part of a \$20-million project, the traditional “tack rooms” were included in each barn along with 16 specified sleeping rooms per barn to allow some workers to remain close at hand.

“I’ve always felt that living conditions on the backside were racing’s Achilles’ heel, so improving those conditions was a high priority with me,” explained Bay Meadows President Jack Liebau. “However, city (San Mateo) officials were reluctant at first to let us include living quarters at the barns. Who could blame them? In years past they all had visited our stable area. They saw firsthand that the living conditions had been less than acceptable.

“One of their conditions for approval was that all of the living quarters – those in the dormitory and those at the barns – had to be built to motel standards. This meant each room had to meet heating, cooling, lighting, and noise-level requirements, as well as other standards, such as minimum size requirements.”

County and regional authorities cited other concerns, especially in matters pertaining to sewage and drainage. Bay Meadows designed a system to meet their concerns. Dirty straw and manure are stored at specific locations, under cover to avoid contamination with rain runoff, which is channeled into the sewage system. The soapy runoff from the

horse wash-down areas is channeled into a pond, where it is treated and brought up to minimum standards before it is released into the San Francisco Bay.

The result is a cleaner stable area – with fewer odors, more attractive to look at, and certainly nicer to live in.

“This is a nice layout, the best I’ve seen,” said Rajendra Sashankar, a visiting assistant trainer who has traveled the country and lived in more tack rooms than he cares to remember. “The tack rooms at Sam Houston are about half this size. It’s the first time I’ve ever seen anything like this.”

About the only thing lacking is complete privacy. Track officials indicated they used all the space available to build living accommodations for about 300-plus workers, which means workers must share rooms.

“I spent two years living in one of the old-style tack rooms, and that was no picnic,” explained Lewis. “The door slipped off its hinges. The gas heaters usually didn’t work. And whenever a horse kicked the wall, it echoed everywhere.

“We’ve come a long way since then. We’re proud of what we’ve done to provide free, clean, safe living quarters to hard-working men and women who deserve no less.”



WAGNER

(Continued from page 4)

wound up in the Policy and Regulations Unit working with the late Earlene McCabe, a beloved manager who took a personal interest in those who worked with her. Under McCabe’s guidance, Wagner learned about regulating the industry and about horse racing itself.

“I only knew that racehorses had four legs and a tail and they ran around the track,” said Wagner. “I had never been exposed to horse racing, so I knew practically nothing about it.”

Obviously, Wagner is a good learner. She soon learned the game, and in the process she impressed those around her. When McCabe retired, Wagner was promoted to unit manager. Then in a restructuring last year, she was given additional responsibilities at the Capitol. She regularly visits legislators and their staffs, exchanging information and educating everyone involved about the intricacies of horse racing.

“I think that most people in the industry will agree that Jackie has been a tremendous asset to the industry as well as the CHRB,” said Roy Minami, assistant executive director of the Board. “Jackie is pretty much regarded as our resident expert on the administrative regulations and, now, our primary contact with the Capitol. As manager of the policy, regulations and legislative unit, she has garnered respect and credibility from the Board and the industry.”

Now that she’s been involved in racing for nine years, Wagner is hooked.

“It’s a large industry, but in a way it’s like a family,” she said. “You get to know people, first by talking with them on the phone, or through letters, then sooner or later you actually meet them and put a face with the name, and you feel like you’ve known them forever.

“I occasionally travel within the state in connection with CHRB meetings and other Board business – just enough travel to satisfy the urge. I wouldn’t want to travel any more than I’m doing. I have a life outside of my job that puts quite a few demands on my time. For instance, I’m a basketball mom. My son, Marcus, is 17 and he’s a 5-foot-11 point guard for Natomas High School. They won 20 games this season.

“I’m choir director at my church. I sing at weddings. And I love gardening – playing in the dirt. I’m trying to get my roses in shape.

“So you see, my roots go pretty deep these days. I love my work and I love my life. Often, things really do turn out for the best.”



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